



# Department of Justice

## UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

October 11, 2012

For Immediate Release

### **AREA MAN SENTENCED FOR FALSIFYING DOCUMENTS FOR VEHICLE OWNERS**

St. Louis, MO - Michael Terry was sentenced today to 13 months in prison for falsifying documentation regarding auto emissions tests and sales tax documentation during his employment at Sure Start Battery & Tire Company on St. Charles Rock Road, St. Louis.

According to court documents, the legitimate business of Sure Start was general vehicle repair including safety and auto emissions testing. Terry conducted false safety and auto emissions tests and provided false safety documentation to vehicle owners for compensation to bypass the Missouri state laws associated with vehicle safety and EPA regulations. Additionally, Terry created false documents showing vehicle insurance; false bill of sale documents on motor vehicles reducing the actual sales price to lower the amount of state sales tax due; and paid personal property tax receipts for vehicle owners to register their vehicles, all of which they personally delivered to the Missouri Department of Revenue office on South Kingshighway, St. Louis. Terry received illegal payments from the vehicle owners for these services. These documents were processed by fee/contract clerks as true and correct and sent to the Missouri Department of Revenue, depriving Missouri of fees and taxes.

"Complete and accurate tests of vehicle emissions are essential to protect the public from harmful air pollutants, and vehicle inspectors who put the environment at risk by falsifying official documents will be prosecuted," said Michael Burnett, Special Agent in Charge of EPA's Office of Criminal Enforcement in Missouri

Michael L. Terry, 25, St. Louis, 63121, pled guilty in May to one felony count of mail fraud, and appeared today for sentencing before United States District Judge Jean C. Hamilton.

This case was investigated by the US Environmental Protection Agency Criminal Investigation Division, the Missouri Department of Revenue, Missouri Highway Patrol, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, and the St. Louis County Police Department. First Assistant United States Attorney Michael W. Reap handled the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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*IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER  
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